



Helping Hands Program

Thank you for supporting Easter Seals and children and adults with disabilities and their families.

Easter Seals provides exceptional services to ensure that all people with disabilities or special needs and their families have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities. Easter Seals primary services - medical rehabilitation, job training and employment, child care, adult and senior services, and camping and recreation – benefit 1.3 million individuals with disabilities and their families each year through more than 550 centers nationwide. See great stories at www.easterseals.com

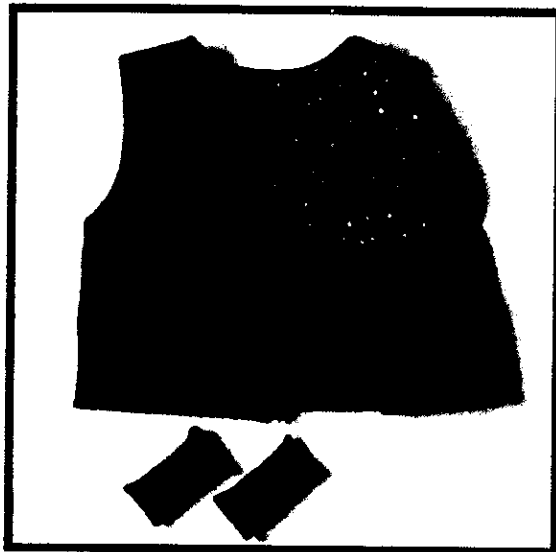
Therapy Vest

General Federation of Women's Clubs members are invited to sew a vest with removable weights for children to wear when receiving occupational therapy.

What is the need?

- Children who are born with/or develop physical and developmental disabilities often show sensory integration difficulties. Sensory integration is the ability to take in information through the senses (touch, smell, taste, vision, and hearing) and movement, to put together prior information, memories, and knowledge – then store that information in the brain. In addition, the brain is responsible for such things as coordination, attention, autonomic functioning, emotions, and memory
- A child with sensory integration dysfunction cannot respond to sensory information and use it to behave in a meaningful, “typical” way.
- Occupational therapy is recommended when a child shows that he/she has sensory integration difficulties. To help a child gain a better sense of their own body and where they are in space, a therapist will recommend the child wear a therapy vest with weights to perform small tasks
- By wearing a therapy vest, the child feels more calm and secure in their daily activities.

Sewing a Therapy Vest



- Any commercial pattern may be used, sized for small, medium and large children such as Simplicity #7357 or #6336. (The patterns could not be included, due to copyright restrictions by pattern companies).
- Denim or other strong fabrics suggested. Solid colors or unisex designs preferred.
- The vest can be lined with brushed cotton, flannel or any soft fabric. Solid colors or unisex designs preferred.
- Velcro closures in front of the vest suggested.
- Sew four or five inside pockets at the inside bottom of the vest. Pockets will hold small weights or beanbags. Attach pockets inside individually or when cutting out the pattern, extend the bottom of the vest, turn up and stitch to create pockets
- Make or buy small weights to fit in pockets. Weights can be approximately four to eight ounces each, filled with small pellets, usually available at craft stores (no rice or beans). Any design or shape welcome.

Completed Vest

When you have completed your vest (s) contact Joan Fishman at Easter Seals headquarters at the address below and you will be connected with an Easter Seals near you. (However, if there is not an Easter Seals office near you, we will ask you to mail the vest (s) to another Easter Seals. They will certainly welcome your efforts!).

Easter Seals
Joan Fishman
230 W. Monroe St., Ste. 1800
Chicago, IL 60606
800/221-6827, ext. 7136 or 312/551-7136 (direct)
jfishman@easterseals.com



Easter Seals Today
Easter Seals assists more than 1 million children and adults with disabilities and their

families annually through a nationwide network of more than 500 service sites. Each center provides top-quality, family-focused and innovative services tailored to meet the specific needs of the particular community it serves.

Primary Easter Seals services include:

- Medical Rehabilitation
 - Early Intervention
 - Physical Therapy
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Speech and Hearing Therapy
- Job Training and Employment
- Inclusive Child Care
- Adult Day Services
- Camping and Recreation

Easter Seals also advocates for the passage of legislation to help people with disabilities achieve independence, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Passed in 1990, the ADA prohibits discrimination against anyone who has a mental or physical disability, guaranteeing the civil rights of people with disabilities.

At the core of the Easter Seals organization is a common passion for caring, shared by its 13,000 staff members and thousands



1984

Served more than 1 million people annually

1990

Helped pass Americans with Disabilities Act into law

1999

Received top recognition by National Health Council for 20th consecutive year

Today

Offers top-quality, innovative services at more than 500 sites



of volunteers, and by those who support its mission. This heart-felt commitment to helping people with disabilities and their families is what Easter Seals is all about.

